

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-106. (Cancelled)

107. (New) A method for managing customer perceptions related to preferences for a plurality of sensory stimulus representations of interest to customers associated with a target focus group, the method comprising:

presenting a sensory stimulus representation through a computer system to a plurality of customers, the sensory stimulus representation embodying one or more sensory cues that influence human behavior;

inputting by the customers into the computer system classification information representing a response elicited in the customers in response to the one or more sensory cues presented to the customers;

aggregating the classification information input by the customers to derive aggregated classification information representative of customer perceptions; and

correlating the aggregated classification information with the one or more sensory cues using the computer system;

whereby the computer system infers, as a function of a correlation of the aggregated classification information and the one or more sensory cues, a relationship

between the sensory stimulus representations and the customer perceptions that is potentially not discernable to a human researcher.

108. (New) The method of claim 107, further comprising identifying at least one sensory cue perceived by the customers in response to the presented sensory stimulus representation, the identified at least one sensory cue relating to one or more elements of the presented sensory stimulus representation.

C 109. (New) The method of claim 107, further comprising receiving, in the computer system, a database comprising a plurality of sensory stimulus representations that are configurable by a user.

110. (New) The method of claim 109, wherein the database is created by the user.

111. (New) The method of claim 109, wherein the database is created by a third party.

112. (New) The method of claim 109, wherein each sensory stimulus representation in the database is associated with an agent that identifies relationships between two or more sensory stimulus representations stored in the database.

113. (New) The method of claim 107, wherein the classification information comprises ratings, and further comprising determining an average rating for a sensory stimulus representation as a function of the ratings.

114. (New) The method of claim 107, wherein the classification information comprises ratings, and further comprising determining a ranking of one or more of the sensory stimulus representations as a function of the ratings.

C' 115. (New) The method of claim 107, further comprising receiving, in the computer system, responses from the customers related to one or more of the sensory stimulus representations.

116. (New) The method of claim 115, wherein at least one response comprises a description of at least one of the sensory stimulus representations in relation to a desired perception.

117. (New) The method of claim 115, wherein at least one response comprises:

a rationale for ranking a set of one or more sensory stimulus representations against a specific desired perception and an opposite perception; and

a description of an emotion of a customer in response to a sensory stimulus representation.

118. (New) The method of claim 107, further comprising receiving a response from a third party related to one or more of the sensory stimulus representations.

119. (New) The method of claim 107, further comprising:
processing the classification information;
outputting from the computer system an initial desired perception and different sensory stimulus representations to be chosen by one or more customers as representatives that reinforce the initial desired perception; and
collecting customer observations and rationale for ranking of the chosen sensory stimulus representations.

120. (New) The method of claim 119, further comprising refining the initial desired perception to represent a more clearly focused desired perception.

121. (New) The method of claim 107, further comprising:
creating a set of sensory stimulus concepts that leverage the at least one cue perceived by the customers in response to the presented sensory stimulus representation;

outputting from the computer system a perceptual map using an output device associated with the computer system; and

receiving input from the user regarding correlation of the set of sensory stimulus concepts with the perceptual map.

122. (New) The method of claim 121, further comprising:

analyzing the correlation of the set of sensory stimulus concepts with the perceptual map; and

C' refining the correlation of the set of sensory stimulus concepts with the perceptual map as a function of the analysis.

123. (New) The method of claim 107, further comprising receiving the classification information from at least one customer using a computer terminal in communication with the computer system via a network.

124. (New) The method of claim 107, wherein the sensory stimulus representation comprises a visual element.

125. (New) An apparatus for determining perception management, the apparatus comprising a computer system having one or more processors and configured to:

present a sensory stimulus representation through a computer system to a plurality of customers, the sensory stimulus representation embodying one or more sensory cues that influence human behavior;

receive as input from the customers classification information representing a response elicited in the customers in response to the one or more sensory cues presented to the customers;

aggregate the classification information input by the customers to derive aggregated classification information representative of customer perceptions; and

correlate the aggregated classification information with the one or more sensory cues using the computer system;

whereby the computer system infers, as a function of a correlation of the aggregated classification information and the one or more sensory cues, a relationship between the sensory stimulus representations and customer perceptions that is potentially not discernable to a human researcher.

126. (New) The apparatus of claim 125, further comprising a data storage system including one or more data storage devices coupled thereto, wherein the data storage system comprises a database coupled to the computer system and configured to store a plurality of sensory stimulus representations.

127. (New) The apparatus of claim 125, wherein the computer system is further configured to identify at least one sensory cue perceived by the customers in response to the presented sensory stimulus representation, the identified at least one cue relating to one or more elements of the presented sensory stimulus representation.

128. (New) The apparatus of claim 125, wherein the computer system is further configured to receive a database comprising a plurality of sensory stimulus representations that are configurable by a user.

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129. (New) The apparatus of claim 128, wherein the database is created by the user.

130. (New) The apparatus of claim 128, wherein the database is created by a third party.

131. (New) The apparatus of claim 128, wherein each sensory stimulus representation in the database is associated with an agent that identifies relationships between two or more sensory stimulus representations stored in the database.

132. (New) The apparatus of claim 125, wherein the classification information comprises ratings, and wherein the computer system is further configured to determine an average rating for a sensory stimulus representation as a function of the ratings.

133. (New) The apparatus of claim 125, wherein the classification information comprises ratings, and wherein the computer system is further configured to determine a ranking of one or more of the sensory stimulus representations as a function of the ratings.

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134. (New) The apparatus of claim 125, wherein the computer system is further configured to receive responses from the customers related to one or more of the sensory stimulus representations.

135. (New) The apparatus of claim 134, wherein at least one response comprises a description of at least one of the sensory stimulus representations in relation to a desired perception.

136. (New) The apparatus of claim 134, wherein at least one response comprises:

a rationale for ranking a set of one or more sensory stimulus representations against a specific desired perception and an opposite perception; and

a description of an emotion of a customer in response to a sensory stimulus representation.

137. (New) The apparatus of claim 125, wherein the computer system is further configured to receive a response from a third party related to one or more of the sensory stimulus representations.

C' 138. (New) The apparatus of claim 125, wherein the computer system is further configured to:

process the classification information;

output from the computer system an initial desired perception and different sensory stimulus representations to be chosen by one or more customers as representatives that reinforce the initial desired perception; and

collect customer observations and rationale for ranking of the chosen sensory stimulus representations.

139. (New) The apparatus of claim 138, wherein the computer system is further configured to refine the initial desired perception to represent a more clearly focused desired perception.

140. (New) The apparatus of claim 125, wherein the computer system is further configured to:

create a set of sensory stimulus concepts that leverage the at least one cue perceived by the customers in response to the presented sensory stimulus representation;

output from the computer system a perceptual map using an output device associated with the computer system; and

receive input from the user regarding correlation of the set of sensory stimulus concepts with the perceptual map.

Cl 141. (New) The apparatus of claim 140, wherein the computer system is further configured to:

analyze the correlation of the set of sensory stimulus concepts with the perceptual map; and

refine the correlation of the set of sensory stimulus concepts with the perceptual map as a function of the analysis.

142. (New) The apparatus of claim 125, wherein the computer system is further configured to receive the classification information from at least one customer using a computer terminal in communication with the computer system via a network.

143. (New) The apparatus of claim 125, wherein the sensory stimulus representation comprises a visual element.

144. (New) An article of manufacture comprising a computer program carrier readable by a computer system having one or more processors and embodying one or more instructions executable by the computer system to perform a method for managing customer perceptions related to preferences for a plurality of sensory stimulus representations of interest to customers associated with a target focus group, the method comprising:

presenting a sensory stimulus representation through a computer system to a plurality of customers, the sensory stimulus representation embodying one or more sensory cues that influence human behavior;

inputting by the customers into the computer system classification information representing a response elicited in the customers in response to the one or more sensory cues presented to the customers;

aggregating the classification information input by the customers to derive aggregated classification information representative of customer perceptions; and

correlating the aggregated classification information with the one or more sensory cues using the computer system;

whereby the computer system infers, as a function of a correlation of the aggregated classification information and the one or more sensory cues, a relationship

between the sensory stimulus representations and the customer perceptions that is potentially not discernable to a human researcher.

145. (New) The article of manufacture of claim 144, wherein the method further comprises identifying at least one sensory cue perceived by the customers in response to the presented sensory stimulus representation, the identified at least one sensory cue relating to one or more elements of the presented sensory stimulus representation.

C¹ 146. (New) The article of manufacture of claim 144, wherein the method further comprises receiving, in the computer system, a database comprising a plurality of sensory stimulus representations that are configurable by a user.

147. (New) The article of manufacture of claim 146, wherein the database is created by the user.

148. (New) The article of manufacture of claim 146, wherein the database is created by a third party.

149. (New) The article of manufacture of claim 146, wherein each sensory stimulus representation in the database is associated with an agent that identifies

relationships between two or more sensory stimulus representations stored in the database.

150. (New) The article of manufacture of claim 144, wherein the classification information comprises ratings, and wherein the method further comprises determining an average rating for a sensory stimulus representation as a function of the ratings.

C¹ 151. (New) The article of manufacture of claim 144, wherein the classification information comprises ratings, and wherein the method further comprises determining a ranking of one or more of the sensory stimulus representations as a function of the ratings.

152. (New) The article of manufacture of claim 144, wherein the method further comprises receiving, in the computer system, responses from the customers related to one or more of the sensory stimulus representations.

153. (New) The article of manufacture of claim 152, wherein at least one response comprises a description of at least one of the sensory stimulus representations in relation to a desired perception.

154. (New) The article of manufacture of claim 152, wherein at least one response comprises:

a rationale for ranking a set of one or more sensory stimulus representations against a specific desired perception and an opposite perception; and

a description of an emotion of a customer in response to a sensory stimulus representation.

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155. (New) The article of manufacture of claim 144, wherein the method further comprises receiving a response from a third party related to one or more of the sensory stimulus representations.

156. (New) The article of manufacture of claim 144, wherein the method further comprises:

processing the classification information;

outputting from the computer system an initial desired perception and different sensory stimulus representations to be chosen by one or more customers as representatives that reinforce the initial desired perception; and

collecting customer observations and rationale for ranking of the chosen sensory stimulus representations.

157. (New) The article of manufacture of claim 156, wherein the method further comprises refining the initial desired perception to represent a more clearly focused desired perception.

158. (New) The article of manufacture of claim 144, wherein the method further comprises:

creating a set of sensory stimulus concepts that leverage the at least one cue perceived by the customers in response to the presented sensory stimulus representation;

outputting from the computer system a perceptual map using an output device associated with the computer system; and

receiving input from the user regarding correlation of the set of sensory stimulus concepts with the perceptual map.

159. (New) The article of manufacture of claim 158, wherein the method further comprises:

analyzing the correlation of the set of sensory stimulus concepts with the perceptual map; and

refining the correlation of the set of sensory stimulus concepts with the perceptual map as a function of the analysis.

160. (New) The article of manufacture of claim 144, wherein the method further comprises receiving the classification information from at least one customer using a computer terminal in communication with the computer system via a network.

161. (New) The article of manufacture of claim 144, wherein the sensory stimulus representation comprises a visual element.